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Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies

Letter dated 15 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In Lithuania's capacity as President of the Community of Democracies, I have the honour to transmit the text of the statement of the Community of Democracies Convening Group on the International Day of Democracy dated 14 September 2009 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly under agenda item 11.

(*Signed*) Dalius **Cekuolis**
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 15 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Convening Group of the Community of Democracies on the International Day of Democracy

14 September 2009

The Community of Democracies congratulates all Member States of the United Nations and organizations of its system, the Conference of New and Restored Democracies, regional and intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and individuals on the occasion of the International Day of Democracy and calls on them to observe and celebrate it. The purpose of the global day of democracy is to raise public awareness on core democratic values and the state of democracy worldwide, and to promote dialogue and tolerance.

The Community of Democracies encourages Member States to strengthen national programmes devoted to the promotion and consolidation of democracy, including through increased bilateral, regional and international cooperation, taking into account innovative approaches and best practices and to consider recognizing 15 September as the official Day of Democracy.

The Community of Democracies reiterates that democracy is a universal value based on the freely expressed will of people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their full participation in all aspects of their lives. Democracy, peace and security, development and human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. It is essential that civil society organizations take responsibility and action to influence the agenda of the International Day of Democracy, making sure that the debate reflects issues relevant to various segments of the population, including the marginalized and people who are poor.

The Community of Democracies underlines that the current financial and economic crisis has brought new challenges that democracies must deal with and calls on Governments, parliamentarians and non-governmental organizations to discuss the implications of the current financial and economic crisis for democratic governance in order to sustain, expand and improve democratic governance at the local, national and global levels.

The Community of Democracies pledges to spare no effort to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law, as well as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

This statement is being made on behalf of the Convening Group of the Community of Democracies, chaired by Lithuania. The following 17 countries are the members of the Group: Cape Verde, Chile, the Czech Republic, El Salvador, India, Italy, Lithuania, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, South Africa and the United States of America.